



2023 Review of Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL)

Closed 8 Dec 2023

Opened 18 Sep 2023

Contact

ASCL Review team

standards@abs.gov.au

Feedback updated 23 Apr 2024

We asked

The public consultation ran for 12 weeks, from 18 September 2023 to 8 December 2023. The ABS sought feedback on the preliminary scope of the review (below) and requested other issues also be identified.

2023 Review of the Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL) preliminary scope:

1. Investigation into the creation of new 4-digit groups (Languages) in the ASCL.
2. Appropriate representation of existing Languages (4-digit groups) in ASCL.
3. Investigation into how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (Broad group 8) are represented in the ASCL.
4. Investigation into representation of sign languages and signed languages in the ASCL.
5. Investigation into the structure of Broad group 9, Other Languages.

For more detailed information on the scope, please refer to *2023 ASCL Review Scope v1.0*, document attached.

You said

This public consultation generated 31 submissions from a range of individuals and organisations.

Most of the items in the preliminary scope were broadly supported for inclusion in the review. The topics in the preliminary scope that attracted the most submissions were the identification of new 4-digit languages, the inaccurate representation of existing languages or identification of languages missing from the classification, and issues with how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages are represented in the ASCL.

In addition to the issues outlined in the scope, a number of other concerns were raised, including:

- Feedback highlighted a lack of transparency and consistency across the framing of all language Broad groups. Many respondents asked for clarification on the labelling and naming conventions used in the ASCL, along with queries related to alternate titles, language variations or dialects.
- Concerns were also raised regarding the current coding structure and lack of stated advice that clearly explains why some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are included in the ASCL at the 4-digit level while others are not.
- Feedback also suggested that the ABS should engage with experts on the topic of sign and signed languages, especially those that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Other suggestions included:

- The need to provide further explanatory information to users regarding the classification principles applied at the 4-digit level of the classification. Some users would also benefit from further advice around the criteria that has been applied to the nec/nfd categories.
- Feedback indicated that users would like more coverage of language groups and community recognized language titles.

We did

The ABS is currently reviewing these submissions and is working closely with stakeholders to draft changes to the ASCL. The proposed changes to ASCL and supporting information will be presented via the ABS Consultation Hub in the second half of 2024. Stakeholders will then be able to provide further feedback before the final update is published in early 2025.

Submissions that included relevant feedback for 2026 Census Content

development and design will be provided to the 2026 Census Content team. Please note that stakeholders do not need to provide their submission again.

Future consultation

The next round of public consultation on the proposed changes to the ASCL is expected to be conducted in the second half of 2024. However, if you would like to provide feedback before then, please contact the ABS at standards@abs.gov.au.

Further information is also available in the FAQ and Scope documents under the heading **Related**.

Any questions?

Please email standards@abs.gov.au with any questions on this consultation or for further information.

Overview

In 2023, the ABS will undertake a major review of the Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL). The review will update the ASCL to better reflect languages that are widely used in the Australian community. Updates to the ASCL will ensure collection and production of high quality data, improving data analysis and decision making.

This review will be informed by analysis of Census data, as well as the feedback received by the ABS, including through the [2026 Census Topic Consultation](#). If you have contributed to this recent consultation, thank you, you do not need to provide this information again.

Changes to the [Language Standards](#) are being considered in the [2026 Census Topic Consultation](#) process which is a separate process to the Language Review.

2023 ASCL Topic Consultation Collection Notice

Who is collecting your personal information?

Your personal information is being collected by the ABS and ABS's technology service provider for the consultation, [Delib](#).

The [ABS Privacy Policy for Managing and Operating Our Business](#) provides details about how we (the ABS) manage and protect your personal information.

How is your personal information collected?

As part of making a submission, you will be providing your personal information to the ABS through our Consultation Hub. The [Privacy Notice](#) for the Consultation Hub explains how we use Delib and its technology (Citizen Space). We (the ABS) manage the website and Delib provides the technology behind this service and its operation. [Delib's Privacy Notice](#) explains how Delib will collect, safeguard, and process your data on behalf of the ABS.

What personal information is collected?

For the 2023 ASCL classification consultation, the ABS will collect and hold the following personal information that you provide:

- Contact name (required)
- Organisation (required, where relevant)
- Email address (required)
- Your opinions on the use and content of the ASCL that should be considered during the review

Contact details are required for the ASCL consultation submissions to allow for follow-up. During the consultation phase of the ASCL, follow-up allows the ABS to clarify the information provided, where necessary and ensure that any negative impacts based on proposed changes to the classification are minimised or mitigated.

How will your personal information be used?

The ABS will use your submission to inform the review of the ASCL and in preparation for the 2026 Census. The ABS will not publish individual submissions from this consultation. However, the ABS will publish a summary, in the form of 'We Asked, You Said, We Did' on the Consultation Hub.

We may also use your name and email address to contact you if we have follow-up questions in relation to your submission. If you consent to receiving email updates regarding the 2023 ASCL review process, we will also use the email address you provided to send these updates to you.

How will your personal information be managed?

We comply with the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Archives Act 1983](#) in the storage, use and destruction of your personal information collected.

When personal information is collected as part of the 2026 Census topic consultation, it is stored in secure data centres in Australia.

The hosting provider for Delib (AWS) meets all Australian Government privacy

and data storage requirements. The ABS will analyse your submission in the Delib system. Your submissions will be deleted from Delib data stores once analysis of all submissions is complete for the 2023 ASCL review process.

The ABS will also extract a copy of your submission shortly after you make your submission and store this in the secure ABS environment. The [ABS Privacy Policy for Managing and Operating Our Business](#) provides details about how we (the ABS) manage and protect your personal information stored in ABS systems. Your full submission, including name (if provided) and email address, will be stored in this environment no later than 2030. We will then remove your name and email address and store a de-identified version of your submission for record keeping purposes.

- If you have not consented to receive email updates from the ABS regarding the ASCL review process, your personal information will not be stored by the ABS.
- If you have consented to receive email updates from the ABS regarding the 2023 ASCL review process, we will store your name and email address until we notify you that the 2023 ASCL review has been finalised.
- You can revoke your consent to receive email updates at any point in time. If you revoke consent, your personal information will be removed.

Who will your personal information be shared with? Does anyone else have access to your personal information?

As the technology service provider, Delib will only access your personal information when requested to do so by the ABS, and only for the purposes of assisting with the administration of the site.

Except for Delib in their data processing role, the ABS will not:

- share information in a way that would identify you or your organisation(s) without your consent
- share information with private organisations, such as direct marketing companies
- share information with other government agencies for compliance or regulation activities.

The [ABS Privacy Policy for Managing and Operating Our Business](#) provides more information about how we handle your personal information.

How to access and correct your personal information

Contact the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided below if you need to access or correct your personal information. If the information you provided in your submission changes, you can contact standards@abs.gov.au.

How to update your submission

A submission cannot be edited in the Consultation Hub once it has been submitted. If the consultation is still open, you can provide a new submission. Please contact (standards@abs.gov.au) to request removal of your original submission.

You can revoke your consent to receive email updates by emailing standards@abs.gov.au.

Privacy complaints

The [ABS Privacy Policy for Managing and Operating Our Business](#) has information about how you can make a complaint if you feel we have not adequately protected your privacy. The Policy describes how we will respond to your complaint, and what you can do if you are not satisfied with our response.

You can contact the ABS Privacy Officer (details below) who will respond to enquiries or assist with complaints.

ABS Privacy Officer contact details

By email: privacy@abs.gov.au

By post: ABS Privacy Officer
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10, Belconnen ACT 2617

Why your views matter

This consultation process provides all Australians with an opportunity to comment on the ASCL; including identification of issues users have with the classification. While the current version of the ASCL had some minor updates in 2016 and 2011, it largely reflects the original 1997 version of the classification based on the social environment in Australia at that time. The language profile of Australia has changed considerably over this time and the ASCL needs to be reviewed to reflect this. ABS has also received feedback from individuals and organisations identifying areas that need to be reviewed.

The information you provide will be used to inform the review and prepare for the 2026 Census.

To make a submission:

1. Please read the information papers:

- [2023 ASCL Review Scope](#)
- [2023 ASCL Review FAQs](#)
- [2023 ASCL Review Survey Questions](#)
- [2023 ASCL Review Timeline](#)

All papers are linked under the heading **Related** at the bottom of the ABS Consultation Hub **Overview** page.

2. A link is provided on the ABS Consultation Hub for the Language Review Survey where you will be guided to provide feedback through a series of questions. You are not required to respond to every question, although your submission will be strengthened by your ability to answer as thoroughly as possible and by providing supporting evidence where possible.

The closing date for submissions is 8 December 2023.

Related

 [2023 ASCL Review Scope 1.0.docx](#)

205.9 KB (Office Word 2007 XML document)

 [2023 ASCL FAQs 1.0.docx](#)

31.3 KB (Office Word 2007 XML document)

 [2023 ASCL Review Survey Questions 1.0.docx](#)

38.2 KB (Office Word 2007 XML document)

 [2023 ASCL Review Timeline 1.0.pptx](#)

9.4 MB (Office Powerpoint 2007 XML presentation)

Audiences

[Data users](#) [Data Users](#) [General Public](#) [Registered Users](#) [Stakeholders](#) [Stakeholders](#)

Interests

[Population](#)

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